Ministry of
Human Resources

2004/05
Annual Service Plan Report

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* *Refer to note on page 3.*

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PLEASE NOTE: On June 16, 2005, the government ministries were re-organized to reflect the new cabinet responsibilities. Many of the website addresses and links in this printed report may have changed following the government re-organization.

- A list of the new ministries is available on the government website at http://www.gov.bc.ca — follow the links to Ministries and Organizations.
- An index of all 2004/05 Annual Service Plan Reports, with up-to-date website links, is available online at http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/annualreports/ .

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

It is a pleasure to present the Annual Service Plan Report of the Ministry of Human Resources for the 2004/05 fiscal year.

The past year has been one of success for the ministry as we see the results of our reforms to British Columbia's income assistance system. Now, we have a system that focuses on long-term employment and self-sufficiency for those who are able to work and one that provides continuing assistance and support for those most in need.

Since June 2001 our caseload has been declining steadily. To date, there are over 100,000 British Columbians who no longer rely on income assistance — including more than 44,000 BC children, which means these families now have more opportunities to achieve their potential. This success is due in large part to the effort and commitment of British Columbians who want to get back into the workforce. This success is also due in part to our investments in a full range of employment programs — programs that benefit 90,000 people a year.

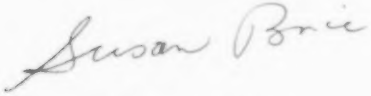
Because we have been successful in helping employable clients move from assistance to good jobs, the profile of British Columbians receiving income assistance is changing. We recognize that providing the best system of supports to those British Columbians who genuinely need them is a priority. Starting this year, we increased rates for persons with disabilities by $70 to a maximum of $856 per month — the largest increase in the history of the province.

We recognize that the health and well-being of British Columbians is paramount and that some of British Columbia's most vulnerable citizens have special health needs. Over the past year we have responded by increasing supports in areas such as dental coverage, eyeglasses, natal supplements, comforts allowance and medical transportation. These enhancements are making a real difference in the quality of life for children, women and people with disabilities.

As part of this government's focus on those most in need, we believe that, along with every community and every level of government, we have a role to play in the ongoing challenge of homelessness. Through the Premier's Taskforce on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions, the Ministry of Human Resources has increased funding for safe, warm emergency shelters across the province by over $5 million to $18.2 million annually — increasing capacity to over 860 year-round beds and nearly 400 cold wet weather shelter beds during winter months. Our goal is to assist people to move beyond temporary shelter to more stable housing, greater self-reliance and long-term employment.

Our accomplishments over the past year are the result of the continuing dedication and hard work of ministry staff. In closing, I would like to thank all Ministry of Human Resources staff for their commitment to excellence.

The 2004/05 Ministry of Human Resources Annual Service Plan Report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the ministry's 2004/05 Service Plan. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Susan Brice
Minister of Human Resources

June 15, 2005

Highlights of the Year

During the 2004/05 fiscal year, the ministry continued to focus on programs that lead to employment and self-reliance and provided assistance to those most in need. Major accomplishments have included moving clients to independence through employment programs, enhancing supports for persons with disabilities, investing in the health and well-being of young children from low-income families and leading the country in being the first province to train disaster relief volunteers through the Emergency Social Services Academy.

1. Moving clients to independence

Employment contributes to a healthy economy, the well-being of British Columbians, and is a key to independence and self-reliance. The ministry continues to emphasize employment programs to move clients to independence. In 2004/05, there were an average of 8,163 fewer families and single British Columbians who relied on income assistance compared to the previous year.

For clients with employment obligations, employment plans establish clear expectations to achieve independence. These plans are important tools for motivating people and assisting them to focus on employment goals. Employment plans outline employment objectives for clients and identify interventions, expected outcomes, and compliance requirements.

The average number of cases that received assistance declined 7.0 per cent to 107,852 this fiscal year. Particularly significant are declines in two-parent (24.0 per cent) and single-parent (14.9 per cent) families. This translated into 7,749 fewer children whose parents relied on income assistance. By reducing parents' dependency on assistance, the ministry is breaking the culture of inter-generational welfare dependency.

Employment Strategy for Vancouver Downtown Eastside

The Vancouver Agreement is a partnership between the federal, provincial and local governments to support economic, social and community development in Vancouver. The initial focus of the work in this agreement is the Downtown Eastside.

The ministry provided a $3.25 million grant to the Vancouver Agreement to design and manage a specialized employment strategy to help income assistance clients find and maintain employment. This grant is expected to assist 700 long-term income assistance clients over the next three years. Clients in this project receive individualized support including assessment, skills training, and referrals to existing and new programs.

	Average 2004/05	Average 2003/04	Average Change	Per cent Change
BC Employment and Assistance Cases by Family Type[1]				
Single men	44,770	47,433	-2,664	-5.6
Single women	31,749	32,513	-764	-2.3
Child in Home of Relative	4,459	4,368	91	2.1
Couples	4,490	4,955	-464	-9.4
Two-Parent Families	3,106	4,089	-983	-24.0
Single-Parent Families	19,277	22,657	-3,379	-14.9
Total	**107,852**	**116,015**	**-8,163**	**-7.0**

[1] A case is a family unit receiving income assistance that could be a single person, a couple, or a family with children. For example, a family of four people is counted as one case that includes four clients.

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Temporary assistance is provided to clients who are capable of financial independence through employment, or are unable to seek work due to short-term medical, health or family circumstances. Included in this group are persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment. Disability assistance is provided to eligible persons with disabilities who are not expected to gain full financial independence through employment. The average number of clients who received temporary assistance declined but those receiving disability assistance increased in 2004/05, compared to last fiscal year. The growing share of resources channeled towards disability assistance is an indication that the ministry is focusing on clients most in need.

	Average 2004/05	Average 2003/04	Average Change	Per cent Change
BC Employment and Assistance Cases by Type of Assistance				
Temporary Assistance	54,122	65,780	-11,658	-17.7
Disability Assistance	53,730	50,235	3,495	7.0
Total	**107,852**	**116,015**	**-8,163**	**-7.0**

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

2. Implementing strategies for persons with disabilities

The ministry introduced the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in April 2002. Fiscal year 2004/05 was an important year as many initiatives continue to make the transition from project planning to implementation. As part of the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities, the ministry implemented the Self-Employment Services in June 2004 by providing training and support to persons with disabilities who have the desire and ability to be self-employed. In February 2005, the ministry implemented the Public Service Employment Program for persons with disabilities. The program promotes the recruitment of persons with disabilities within the public service.

Disability becomes ability in Neil Squire Centre

In July 2004, through a $50,000 grant from the Disability Supports for Employment Fund (DSEF), a Disability Supports Centre of the Neil Squire Foundation was declared opened. For people with disabilities who face challenges in securing employment, the centre provides employment-related technical aids, assessment, personal services, and equipment modifications and other employment-related supports.

The DSEF is a $20 million endowment fund established by the BC Government in 2003. The purpose of the DSEF is to initiate and fund innovative projects that provide disability supports to enhance the capacity of adults with disabilities to secure and retain employment and volunteer placements.

An important initiative of the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities was the creation of the Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in 2003. The Council is a "call to action" and a positive challenge to British Columbia's business community. The principal goal of the Council is to advise the Minister of Human Resources on solutions and strategies for increasing employment, employability and independence of people with disabilities, particularly through partnerships with business and industry throughout BC. The Council has representation from the business, community, government and education sectors.

WorkAble Solutions, an initiative launched by the Minister's Council in December 2004, that connects BC employers to persons with disabilities by providing valuable employment resources and support. An interactive website, an employer handbook and a corporate video were produced as part of this initiative. They all serve to inform, educate and support the recruitment, employment and retention of people with disabilities. WorkAble Solutions is co-sponsored by the British Columbia Human Resources Management Association (HRMA), and is an example of a successful Minister's Council partnership to support people with disabilities.

Further to these initiatives, the Disability Supports for Employment Fund (DSEF) was created through a $20 million endowment by the provincial government to the Vancouver Foundation. The endowment generates, in perpetuity, $1 million in DSEF grant monies available to organizations in the charitable, non-profit sector in British Columbia. The purpose of the DSEF is to initiate and fund innovative projects that will provide disability supports to enhance the capacity of adults with disabilities to secure and retain employment and volunteer placements.

Monthly rate increase for Persons with Disabilities

Effective January 1, 2005, the ministry announced a $70 monthly rate increase for persons with disabilities. This means a single person with a disability in BC receives up to a maximum of $856.42 each month for shelter and support. The increase is the largest in the history of the province.

In addition to Disability Assistance, persons with disabilities receive Supplementary Assistance in the form of medical coverage, Pharmacare, dental coverage, medical transportation and low-cost bus passes. It is the goal of the BC Government for the decade ahead to build the best support system for people with disabilities in the country.

3. Collaborating with ministries of Health Services and Children and Family Development

A key priority for the BC government is to have ministries who serve common clients work together in developing services and programs. In 2004/05, the ministries of Health Services and Human Resources jointly announced an investment of $47 million over the next three years to improve dental treatment for young children and low-income families. Dental decay is the most common chronic condition of childhood and directly affects a person's well-being. With the additional funding, low-income families can look forward to affordable dental care.

Improvements to the Child Care Subsidy Program, announced in early 2005, also streamlined services and improved service delivery to clients. The ministries of Children and Family Development and Human Resources jointly implemented enhancements to the program including an increase to the income threshold, new subsidies for families with young children and increased supplements for families with special needs children.

4. Leading the country in training Emergency Social Service volunteers

Emergency Social Services (ESS) volunteers respond to approximately 340 emergencies and assist over 2,500 British Columbians each year. The ESS Program delivers essential services such as food, lodging, clothing and emotional support during disasters. Several initiatives were undertaken in 2004/05 by the ESS program office. They include the opening of the 17th Emergency Preparedness Conference, distribution of the ESS Program Field Guide, full implementation of the BC Emergency Response Management System to the ESS program and a redesign of the ESS website.

The year's highlight was the opening of the Emergency Social Services Academy in June 2004, the first in the country. The ministry provided funding to train community volunteers through the academy. Training ESS volunteers is essential because it provides the knowledge and skills to respond to emergencies or disasters they may face in their own communities. The ESS Academy is part of the Emergency Management Division located at the Justice Institute of BC.

In 2004, over 2,500 people received emergency social services in 347 incidents resulting from landslides, apartment fires and wildfires across the province. For example, in August 2004, a community ESS team helped 20 evacuees when the Kuskanook mudslides closed a major highway in the Creston area. In January 2005, over 700 evacuees registered at ESS Reception Centres in North Vancouver, Keremeos, Merritt, Golden, Hixon, Prince George and Clearwater as a result of severe weather emergencies in those areas. ESS teams were also promptly formed to help with relief efforts in response to wildfires in the summer of 2004.

5. Expanding the Emergency Shelter Program

The Emergency Shelter Program offers shelter, food and other services to meet basic shelter, nutritional and hygiene needs of the homeless in BC communities. Cold wet weather beds operate as a seasonal extension of the Emergency Shelter Program to maximize the number of emergency shelter beds across BC during the winter months when they are most needed.

In 2004/05, the ministry increased funding for emergency shelters by $5.1 million to $18.2 million annually. The increased funding added 168 year-round emergency shelter beds and 208 cold wet weather beds. The cold wet weather strategy was expanded from five to six months and additional funding was provided for extreme cold winter weather. The ministry also allocated funds for shelters to purchase warm clothing, blankets, clothes dryers and related items.

Ministry Role and Services

The vision, mission and values outlined in the Ministry of Human Resources 2004/05 to 2006/07 Service Plan guided the ministry's achievements in 2004/05.

Vision

The Ministry of Human Resources envisions a province in which those British Columbians in need are assisted to achieve their social and economic potential.

Mission

The Ministry of Human Resources provides services that move people toward sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need.

Values

The core values outlined in the *British Columbia Government Strategic Plan 2004/05 to 2006/07* are integrity, fiscal responsibility, accountability, respect and choice. Building upon this foundation, the ministry has identified the following additional values, which continue to guide the delivery of our services and define our relationships with clients, partners and staff. The Ministry of Human Resources' values are reflected in its work every day, and support the government's broader strategic plan and priorities. The ministry's values are:

- **Personal responsibility** — The ministry emphasizes personal responsibility by assisting clients who are able to work to find employment and achieve independence. The ministry supports the efforts of clients who are working to enhance their self-reliance and involvement in their communities.
- **Active participation** — Clients who are able to work are expected to actively seek employment. The ministry supports these efforts with work search and job placement services, targeted employment training and tools such as employment plans. The ministry provides additional/specialized supports to persons with disabilities to maximize their self-reliance.
- **Innovative partnerships** — The ministry is developing creative and innovative ways of working with a range of service providers and external agencies, as well as directly with clients to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of the services provided.
- **Citizen confidence** — Maintaining public confidence in ministry programs and services is fundamental to realizing the ministry's long-term objective of providing a sustainable income assistance system that provides for those most in need.
- **Fairness and transparency** — The ministry functions under the principles of administrative fairness and transparency by informing all clients of all reasons a decision is made and providing access to a fair and impartial review of the original decision, through reconsideration and appeals.

- **Clear outcomes** — The ministry sets out clear outcomes, whether in the form of clearly defined goals as outlined in the Service Plan 2004/05 - 2005/06 or responsibilities of clients detailed in their employment plans.
- **Accountability for results** — The ministry is accountable to government and all British Columbians for results through performance management systems. Accordingly, all members of the ministry are expected to consistently demonstrate the highest standards of professional ethics and integrity.

"Dignity and Respect"

In the 2005/06 - 2007/08 Service Plan, the ministry included "Dignity and Respect" in the list of values it embraces. The ministry is committed to treating all members of the public with equity and fairness, upholding the principles of dignity and respect. The ministry does this through open communication, building effective relationships and maintaining high ethical standards.

Ministry Overview, Core Business Areas and Structure

Ministry Overview

The ministry continued to take a multi-faceted approach to providing services that move people toward sustainable employment and assisting individuals and families in need. This included assisting clients to find employment, providing temporary assistance to clients capable of financial independence and ongoing assistance to those who are not expected to gain independence through employment.

The *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* provided the legislative mandate for the BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) program.

Core Business Area: Employment Programs

Employment programs are available to assist clients to find and sustain employment. Individualized employment plans signed by clients may include directed work search, referral to job placement programs and specific training for employment. Specialized employment programs that support persons with disabilities are included within this core business area.

Core Business Area: Temporary Assistance

Temporary assistance is available to clients who are capable of financial independence through employment, or are unable to seek work because of a short-term condition, as described in the *Employment and Assistance Act*. Persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment are included in this group.

Core Business Area: Disability Assistance

Disability assistance is available to eligible individuals who are not expected to gain complete financial independence through employment, including clients with disabilities who are seeking work.

Core Business Area: Supplementary Assistance

Supplementary assistance is available to eligible clients, providing health and other supports such as emergency shelters, bus passes, health services for persons with disabilities, user fees for continuing care and for alcohol and drug treatment facilities.

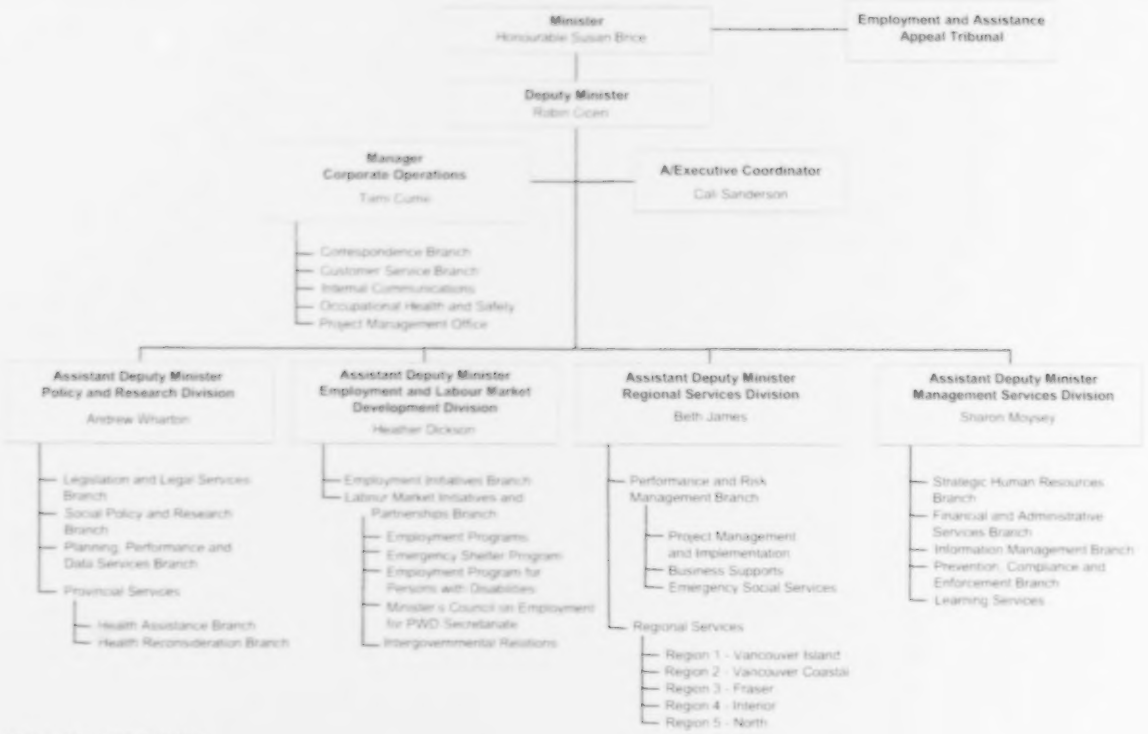
Core Business Area: Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal provides clients with timely decisions through a single-level, regionally-based appeal system that is available for individuals who wish to appeal decisions of the ministry. The tribunal operates independently of the ministry.

Core Business Area: Executive and Support Services

Executive and support services provide salaries, benefits, allowances and operating expenses of the minister's office, ministry corporate services and program management.

Ministry Organization Structure/Chart



Updated: June 6, 2005

In 2004/05, the ministry operated under the following divisions:

- **Policy and Research Division** — provided analytical services and leadership in the development of social policy, legislation, strategic planning, forecasting, planning and performance measurement, and evaluation. The division also provided direct services to clients by reviewing and adjudicating eligibility for the persons with disabilities designation, providing assistance to meet medical needs and maintain independent community living, conducting independent reviews of submitted documentation and rendering the ministry's final decision regarding eligibility for health assistance.
- **Employment and Labour Market Development Division** — designed and managed programs and services to assist BC Employment and Assistance clients find sustainable employment through job placement, work experience and targeted training. The division also designed programs to support persons with disabilities enhance their participation in working or volunteering and provided leadership on various issues relating to homelessness and emergency shelters. The division supported the ministry's participation on the Ministers Responsible for Social Services, the Forum of Labour Market Ministers and other related inter-governmental activities.
- **Regional Services Division** — served as the main mechanism of the ministry for providing financial and disability assistance to clients. The division delivered high quality, efficient and effective program services, with the emphasis on assisting clients

find sustained employment. There are five geographic regions throughout the province, each lead by an Executive Director who reports to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Regional Services. The Executive Directors are responsible for the successful delivery of BC Employment and Assistance Programs in their respective region. Programs are delivered through 106 Employment and Assistance Centres throughout the province and the Interior Call Centre located in Kamloops.

- **Management Services Division** — delivered services to enable the smooth running of the ministry's operations — human resources, financial and administrative services, information management and fraud prevention and eligibility compliance.
- **Corporate Operations** — assisted the Deputy Minister in managing a range of ministry-wide programs and executive initiatives. This area has responsibility for Project Management, Customer Service, Correspondence, Internal Communications and Occupational Health and Safety.

Ministry Operating Context

The ministry's operating context is affected by a number of economic, income, social, demographic and internal components. Some of these factors facilitated the ministry's ability to achieve its goals in 2004/05; others were more challenging and may have slowed the ministry's progress. Many of these components will continue to impact the ministry.

Economic

The British Columbia economy grew by 3.9 per cent in 2004, leading all provinces, after growth of 2.5 per cent in 2003. Domestic activity continued to be the main driver of economic growth last year. Business investment grew by 11.7 per cent. Growth in housing starts of 25.8 per cent in 2004 led to residential construction investment growth of 14.8 per cent. Additionally, machinery and equipment investment, supported by a stronger Canadian dollar, saw growth of 20.0 per cent in 2004. Consumer spending, which accounts for two-thirds of all economic activity in the province, grew 4.1 per cent in 2004. Particularly strong growth of 4.7 per cent in durable goods expenditures and 5.4 per cent growth in semi-durables expenditures were supported by low interest rates and strong employment growth of 2.3 per cent in 2004. Despite the continued rise of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar in 2004, total exports of goods and services grew by 4.9 per cent. Imports of goods and services grew by 6.4 per cent in 2004.

The Labour Force Survey by Statistics Canada shows that BC recorded an unemployment rate of 7.2 per cent for 2004, the lowest level in the last two decades, with the exception of the year 2000, which had the same rate. The average weekly wage grew slightly to $687 in 2004, higher compared to previous years and surpassing the national average of $680. Success in some of the ministry's goals and objectives was definitely facilitated by the strong economic growth and employment rate experienced by the province during the year.

The service sector continued to be BC's largest employer in 2004, constituting more than two-thirds of total employment. Approximately 26,200 more jobs were created in the service sector compared to 2003. The strength of this sector provided a favorable condition for ministry clients with employment obligations to find work.

Income

Income data are complex to analyze. There are as many ways to examine income as there are ways to rank relative poverty. Low-income cut-offs (after-tax) or LICOs, which reflect the income level at which a family is likely to spend significantly more on food, shelter and clothing than the average family, is a common measure for the prevalence of poverty in a community. The measure was re-based by Statistics Canada for the years 1994 to 2003. Comparing these re-based figures, the low income rate for BC was at its highest at 16.8 per cent in 1996 and lowest at 14.1 per cent in 2001, with the 2003 rate being the middle range at 15.1 per cent.

Analysis done by the ministry shows that there is a close relationship between low-income and unemployment rates. As unemployment rates for BC are predicted to stay low in the coming years because of the anticipated strong economy, the low-income rate is expected to drop.

Social

Solutions to homelessness continues to be a challenge for government. Reliable data on the number of homeless people or those living in shelters is difficult to gather. There are complex inter-relationships between homelessness and health care, social services and the criminal justice system. Many of those who are homeless or living in shelters have multiple challenges including mental health conditions, substance abuse, physical disabilities, conflict with the justice system and poor social supports.

As part of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addiction, the ministry increased the number of year-round emergency shelter beds, food, and other services to British Columbians throughout the province during 2004.

Demographic

The population of this province was 4.2 million people in 2004. The province gained a net total of 7,080 people from other provinces, the highest since 1996. BC received a net total of 28,500 immigrants. Based on analysis conducted by the ministry, population growth from migration puts pressure on the caseload while the impact of immigration tends to be minor.

The ministry monitors demographic changes for other impacts they may pose. For example, the changing structure of BC families is reflected in the income assistance caseload. As a proportion of all families, single-parent families rose from 13.8 per cent in 1996 to 15.5 per cent in 2001 for the general population and increased from 70.3 per cent to 72.2 per cent of income assistance families. These comparisons can only be done every five years when the census is updated but the ministry is aware of the complexity of the difficulties faced by single-parent clients. During 2004/05, the proportion of single-parent families that received services from the ministry was 71.7 per cent.

Internal

The ministry utilized a workforce of 1,869 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 2004/05 and continued to improve business processes through the use of technology and changes in business processes.

An example of this focus on technology and improved service delivery is the expansion of the BCEA Web Orientation, which now provides information on ministry services and online work search resources in 12 languages, previously, this service was only available in English. In addition, it also provides audio versions for people with literacy barriers or visual impairments. While this replaces the in-person sessions, the regions continue to offer personalized services for a small number of users who may have difficulty accessing the website. Given that as many as one-quarter of British Columbians consider that English is not their first language in the 2001 Census, websites like this clearly enhance the ministry's service delivery.

The ministry's regional realignment initiative to match the regions of the Ministries of Children and Family Development and Health Services was fully implemented during 2004/05. This promoted joint partnerships and streamlined service delivery as outlined in the next section.

New Era Commitments

In a June 25, 2001 letter to the Minister of Human Resources, Premier Gordon Campbell identified three key priorities for the ministry to focus on in its first three years:

1. Continue to streamline regional service delivery to clients of income assistance.
2. Implement training and support programs to assist income assistance clients in returning to the workforce.
3. With the Administrative Justice Project, develop a single internal appeal process.

All of the above key priorities were implemented by 2004/05.

1. Streamlined regional service delivery

The ministry introduced a pilot of the Service Enhancement Program (SEP) in 2004/05. The Service Enhancement Program was created to design, pilot and evaluate new methods for people applying for assistance and for verifying on-going eligibility. Under SEP, people inquiring about income assistance receive more information earlier in the application process. This includes information on the three-week work search, income and asset levels, employment plan requirements and potential community resources. Pilot results indicated that the new processes increased consistency in service delivery to clients across the province. With standardized work processes, staff can spend more time assisting clients in becoming self-reliant.

By late 2004/05, the ministry had been operating under its five new geographical regions for 18 months. These new regional boundaries matched those of our partner ministries

— Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health Services. The ministries, with these common regions, are able to work better together and provide more streamlined and coordinated services. It also promoted functionality amongst ministries.

2. Implemented training and support programs to assist clients

The Job Placement Program continued through 2004/05 to support clients to move to independence. In partnership with contracted agencies, the program provides a range of services that includes assessing clients' job readiness, supporting clients to find employment, monitoring clients' progress in the workplace and providing support to employers.

The Training for Jobs Program provides short-term, integrated training to enable clients to enter or return to sustainable employment. The focus is on clients who face persistent multiple barriers to employment and those who have not found employment with the assistance of other ministry programs. Contracted service providers work with clients to identify their training needs, provide skill-specific training, place clients in employment and support them to sustain that employment over a period of up to 18 months.

The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities continues to provide a range of specialized services to support persons with disabilities to take on employment or employment-related activities. They include pre-employment, employment planning and employment services — all of which help support persons with disabilities in the workplace. Clients who are not seeking independence through employment are supported to work part-time or participate in volunteer activities in their communities.

3. Developed a single internal appeal process

In delivering the promises stated in the *New Era* framework, the BC government committed to fair treatment, openness, accountability and choice in the delivery of its programs and services. Through the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Administrative Justice Project (AJP) was initiated to review the province's system of administrative justice. This project examined a range of issues including agency mandates, administrative practices and procedures, appointments, training, performance measurement and public accountability.

In conjunction with the AJP, the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal was introduced in September 2002. The Tribunal provides a single, streamlined, independent process for reviewing clients' appeals in an open, fair and timely manner. It replaced the previous multi-step appeal process, which took as long as six months to conclude. Under the new process, regional panels adjudicate appeals within the 15-business day statutory limit. In 2004/05, the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal was fully operational. More information on the achievements of the Tribunal is detailed in Goal 4 of this report.

Report on Performance

Overview of Ministry Goals and Linkage to Government Strategic Goals

Over the course of the past year, the Ministry of Human Resources has worked toward achieving the following five goals that were detailed in our *Service Plan 2004/05 – 2006/07*. Collectively, they provide the strategic direction that guided all of our operations and directly support government's goal of a *"supportive social fabric"*.

Government of British Columbia Strategic Goals

Goal 1: A strong and vibrant provincial economy.

Goal 2: A supportive social fabric.

Goal 3: Safe, healthy communities and a sustainable environment.

Ministry Mission

The Ministry of Human Resources provides services that move people toward sustainable employment and assists individuals and families in need.

Government Strategic Goals		Ministry Goals
Goal 2: A supportive social fabric. Objective D: British Columbians will be self-sufficient.	→	Clients who are able to work become self-reliant through employment.
	→	Clients increase their independence through income assistance, employment and volunteer programs.
	→	Clients receive supplementary assistance for health, transportation and emergency needs.
	→	Individuals have access to a fair and timely appeal process.
	→	The ministry operates effectively, responsively and accountably.

Report on Results

Overview

The Ministry of Human Resources set five goals and nine objectives for 2004/05. Fifteen performance measures were used to gauge how well the ministry met them. Results show that five performance measures exceeded targets, nine achieved targets and one did not achieve the established target.

Update on the 2004/05 Performance Measures

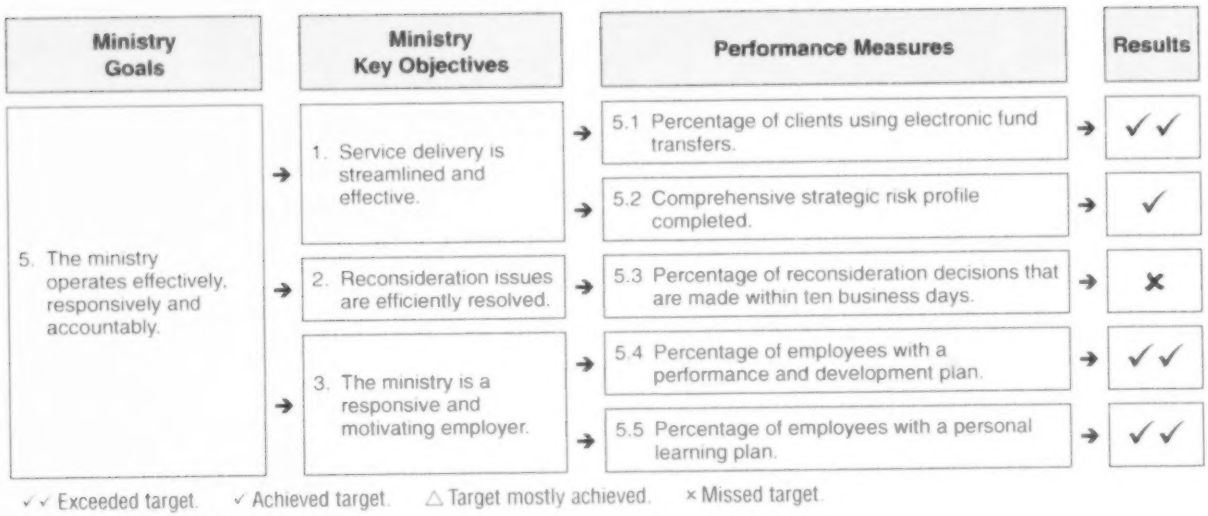
2004/05 is the fourth year the Ministry of Human Resources is reporting its progress based on the *New Era* framework. Over the years, the ministry has improved its performance measures to make them more meaningful for measuring progress. For 2004/05, eight of the 15 performance measures were new, four were revised from the previous year and three remained the same.

The ministry's achievement in many of its targets is a demonstration that it is making progress in key areas. The decrease in the percentage of BC's population receiving income assistance — Measure 2.1 — demonstrates that the citizens of BC are becoming more economically independent and self-reliant. Fewer are relying on income assistance. The percentage of BC's population receiving disability assistance — Measure 2.2 — increased, indicating that that the ministry is focusing its resources to clients most in need.

Measure 5.3, which is the percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days is the only measure that did not meet the target. Complex medical evidence is required to determine eligibility, often leading to delays which limited the ministry's ability to meet this service plan target.

Ministry Goals	Ministry Key Objectives	Performance Measures	Results
1. Clients who are able to work become self-reliant through employment.		1.1 Percentage of BC's population aged 19–64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations.	✓
	1. Clients actively seek work as a condition of eligibility.	1.2 Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan.	✓
	2. Clients find employment through job placement services.	1.3 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.	✓
2. Clients increase their independence through income assistance, employment and volunteer programs.		2.1 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance.	✓✓
		2.2 Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance.	✓✓
	1. Persons with disabilities who seek work find employment and persons with disabilities who seek to volunteer are placed in volunteer positions.	2.3 Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare earnings from working or volunteering.	✓
	2. The self-reliance of persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment is improved.	2.4 Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.	✓
3. Clients receive supplementary assistance for health, transportation and emergency needs.	1. Ensure that only eligible individuals receive supplementary assistance.	3.1 Percentage of clients receiving a service, who are confirmed eligible for the service.	✓
4. Individuals have access to a fair and timely appeal process.	1. Decisions are made on appeals and parties notified within the statutory timelines.	4.1 Percentage of appeals processed from initial intake to final decisions within statutory timelines.	✓
		4.2 Percentage of appeals heard within 15 business day statutory time limit.	✓

✓✓ Exceeded target. ✓ Achieved target. △ Target mostly achieved. × Missed target.


Ministry Goals
Ministry Key Objectives
Performance Measures
Results
5. The ministry operates effectively, responsively and accountably.
1. Service delivery is streamlined and effective.
5.1 Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.
✓✓
5.2 Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.
✓
2. Reconsideration issues are efficiently resolved.
5.3 Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days.
×
3. The ministry is a responsive and motivating employer.
5.4 Percentage of employees with a performance and development plan.
✓✓
5.5 Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.
✓✓
✓✓ Exceeded target. ✓ Achieved target. △ Target mostly achieved. × Missed target.

Goal 1: Clients who are able to work become self-reliant through employment

Clients who leave income assistance for employment have higher incomes and a better sense of self-worth. Children whose parents work are more likely to complete high school, be actively involved in the labour market and less likely to receive income assistance as adults.

Performance Measures	Results	
1.1 Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations.	✓	Achieved
1.2 Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan.	✓	Achieved
1.3 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.	✓	Achieved

The ministry achieved all three targets for Goal 1.

Core Business Areas: Employment Programs, Temporary Assistance, Disability Assistance

Performance Measure and Results

Increasing the number of clients who find employment is a critical aspect of the ministry's mission. With some exceptions (for example, single-parents with children under three years of age), all temporary assistance clients have employment-related obligations.

In 2004/05, only 3.6 per cent of BC's population were receiving income assistance. This included working age clients with employment-related obligations, clients who are exempted from employment-related obligations, persons with disabilities, persons with

persistent multiple barriers to employment and children in the home of a relative. The first group — working age clients with employment-related obligations shown in Measure 1.1 — stood at 1.2 per cent of the population age 19-64 in 2004/05. A lower percentage means a higher proportion of people are leaving income assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Actual	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
1.1 Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations[1].	3.6%	2.5%	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%	0%

[1] As of April 2004, the category of clients the ministry defined as "expected to work and have a medical condition" have employment-related obligations. Previously, they did not have employment-related obligations. The figures for all of the above years have been updated based on the new definition.

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Measure 1.1 shows a marked improvement from all previous years and has met the target for 2004/05. The improvement from last year was largely attributed to a robust economy in 2004/05, resulting in low unemployment and strong job creation. As well, the ministry's front line staff continued to monitor clients' progress and ensured that all options leading to employment were explored with clients.

Objective 1: Clients actively seek work as a condition of eligibility.

Strategies

1. Enquirers are required to undertake a three-week self-directed work search as a condition of eligibility.
2. Clients with employment-related obligations are required to complete and comply with employment plans as a condition of eligibility.

Employment plans are the foundation for ongoing dialogue and planning between ministry staff and clients. Developed collaboratively with the client, the employment plan outlines employment objectives for clients and identifies interventions, expected outcomes, and compliance requirements. It also facilitates performance management and accountability reporting. The process ensures that clients have access to the tools and supports they require to find employment and to become independent of income assistance.

Measure 1.2 reflects the importance of the employment plan as a tool to assist clients in moving towards independence. In 2003/04, the baseline for this measure was established. Higher percentages for this measure indicate success by the ministry in encouraging self-reliance and in assisting clients achieve independence.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance[1]
1.2 Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan.	63.4%	85.0%	91.0%	+6.0%

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

The measure surpassed the target by 6.0 per cent due to concerted efforts by ministry staff to ensure that clients with employment-related obligations have an active employment plan.

Objective 2: Clients find employment through job placement services.

Strategies

1. Clients access job placement services which are performance-based.

The ministry offers job placement services to support clients in finding and keeping employment. Research indicates that the likelihood of returning to income assistance significantly decreases for clients who maintain financial independence for at least six months.

The Job Placement Program assists clients with support such as resume preparation, employment and personal counseling, and work search assistance. The program is delivered through contracted service providers. The payment to these contractors is determined by the number of clients in their program who achieve independence from income assistance. Each year, the ministry refers approximately 20,000 clients to the Job Placement program.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
1.3 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.	83.0%	84.4%	80% to 90%	83.9%	+3.9%

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Measure 1.3 — percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months — met the target range of 80 to 90 per cent. The target is set at a range to allow for fluctuations in local economies and for variations in readiness of those clients referred to the program.

Goal 2: Clients increase their independence through income assistance, employment and volunteer programs

To achieve this goal, the ministry provides financial assistance and a range of programs to persons with disabilities and persons with multiple barriers to employment to enhance their independence and fulfil their potential. The ministry offers services that support life-skill development or volunteer opportunities to increase their quality of life and employability.

The ministry also has employment programs designed specifically to support persons with disabilities to find sustainable employment or enhance their participation in the community. Targets for all measures under Goal 2 were achieved.

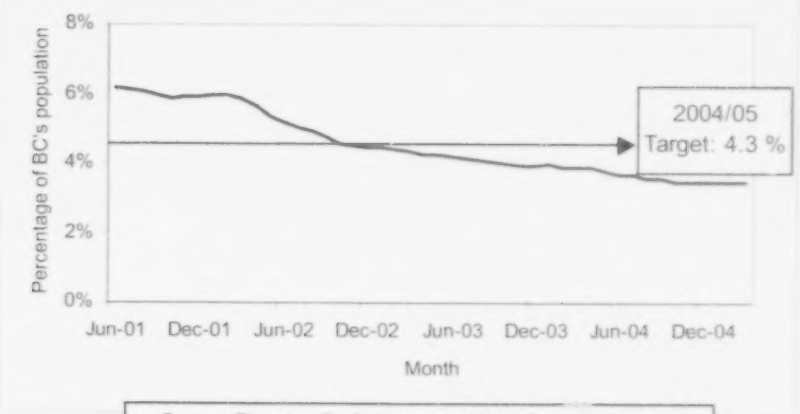
Performance Measures	Results	
2.1 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance.	✓✓	Exceeded
2.2 Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance.	✓✓	Exceeded
2.3 Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare earnings from working or volunteering.	✓	Achieved
2.4 Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.	✓✓	Achieved

Core Business Areas: Employment Programs, Temporary Assistance, Disability Assistance

Performance Measure and Results

Measure 2.1 is the percentage of BC's population receiving income assistance. Figure 1 shows the percentage has been declining since June 2001. This indicates a decreasing proportion of the provincial population is dependent on income assistance, particularly clients receiving temporary assistance.

Figure 1: Percentage of BC's popluation receiving income assistance June 2001 to March 2005, British Columbia



Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources

Domestic activity continued to be the main economic driver in 2004. New business investments, record-breaking housing starts, strong consumer spending and other economic activities all provided a favourable external environment for the ministry to meet its target

for Measure 2.1. An increase in service sector jobs, fueled by the strong economy, is another contributor to meeting the target for Measure 2.1.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Actual	2002/03 Actual[1]	2003/04 Actual[1]	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
2.1 Percentage of BC's population receiving income assistance.	6.0%	4.8%	4.1%	4.3%	3.6%	+0.7%

[1] These figures differ slightly from previous years' Annual Reports because they are now based on actual rather than estimated population numbers.

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

The ministry's focus on programs that lead to employment and personal responsibility also contributed to the improvement of Measure 2.1.

The ministry is gaining greater understanding of the unique circumstances and challenges faced by clients receiving disability assistance. Initiatives by the Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in 2004/05, such as the *Recruitment and Retention of Persons with Disabilities in BC Research Project*, provided valuable insights into employers' perspectives on hiring persons with disabilities. Through these initiatives, the ministry is able to create more effective programs to raise awareness and provide supports to employers. Data shows that the target for Measure 2.2, which measures the proportion of caseload on disability assistance, was exceeded.

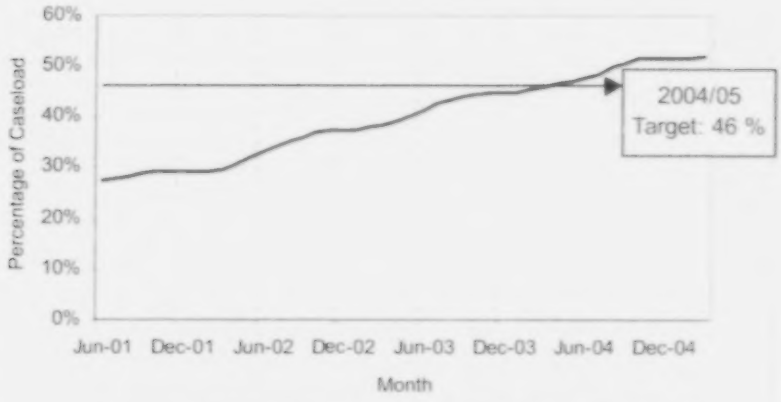
Performance Measure	2001/02 Actual	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
2.2 Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance.	28.4%	35.4%	43.3%	46.0%	49.8%	+3.8%

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

As the ministry succeeds in assisting clients to find and maintain employment, an increasing proportion of the caseload is made up of persons with disabilities. Some persons with disabilities are unable to work and others may only be able to work part-time or for part of the year. Figure 2, depicting Measure 2.2, shows that the percentage of the disability assistance caseload has not only surpassed the target for 2004/05, but also has been increasing since June 2001.

The steady increase demonstrates that the ministry has focused its resources on those most in need.

Figure 2: Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance
June 2001 to March 2005, British Columbia



Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources

Objective 1: Persons with disabilities who seek work find employment and persons with disabilities who seek to volunteer are placed in volunteer positions.

Strategy

1. Employment services and related supports are provided to persons with disabilities to enhance their self-reliance.

Performance Measure and Results

Several on-going initiatives in 2004/05 continued to support persons with disabilities to engage in full or part-time employment or voluntary work. The ministry provided pre-employment services to these clients, including assistance in work search, job coaching, job placement, follow-up services, employment crisis services and assistance with starting their own businesses.

The key initiative in fulfilling this objective is the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities introduced in 2002. The ministry is beginning to see success from this initiative, as demonstrated in the improvement in Measure 2.3. Not only was the target exceeded, the 2004/05 actual also out-performed the previous years' results. This measure tracks disability assistance clients who had either employment or volunteer income.

Volunteering is a valuable activity for many clients who are receiving disability assistance and unable to achieve independence through employment. Volunteer work may lead to employment, as it often provides valuable skills and experience. Volunteering is also an opportunity for clients to contribute to their communities, thereby enhancing their social participation and increasing their quality of life.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual[1]	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
2.3 Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare earnings from working or volunteering.	14.0%	14.3%	14.7%	15.1%	+0.4%

[1] The previously published figure was calculated incorrectly and has been revised.

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Earning exemptions allow persons with disabilities to keep a portion of their after-tax employment income, which encourages them to obtain part-time employment and improve their standard of living. The achievement of the target for this measure is in part due to an increase in the monthly earnings exemption from $300 to $400 in 2004/05.

Objective 2: The self-reliance of persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment is improved.

Strategy

1. Clients with persistent multiple barriers to employment participate in programs that enhance their employability.

Performance Measure and Results

Some ministry clients face significant barriers to achieving self-reliance through employment resulting from limited life-skills, minimal employment history, and low literacy levels. The ministry provides clients who have persistent multiple barriers to employment with services aimed at increasing their self-reliance by developing life skills and by providing pre-employment opportunities.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual
2.4 Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.	Establish baseline	54.1%

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Measure 2.4 is a new measure that tracks the percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment who are served by ministry programs. The baseline was established in fiscal 2004/05. A higher percentage for this measure in the future indicates that clients are increasing their community involvement and enhancing their self-reliance.

Goal 3: Clients receive supplementary assistance for health, transportation and emergency needs

Performance Measure	Results	
3.1 Percentage of clients receiving a service who are confirmed eligible for the service.	✓	Achieved

The ministry provides a range of supplementary services designed to meet emergency and medical needs of clients and other British Columbians. These services include health assistance, emergency social services, bus passes, emergency shelters, travel assistance and user fees for continuing care and alcohol and drug facilities.

In fulfilling Goal 3, the ministry is careful that for every new or modified policy developed for supplementary assistance, it also builds the necessary tools to assist staff to determine eligibility. The only measure for Goal 3 achieved its target for 2004/05.

Core Business Areas: Supplementary Assistance

Objective 1: Ensure that only eligible individuals receive Supplementary Assistance.

Strategy

1. Respond to requests for supplementary assistance from eligible clients.

Performance Measure and Results

Results from Measure 3.1 indicate that all clients who received supplementary assistance were eligible. The ministry provides staff with the necessary tools to determine eligibility for supplementary assistance. These include policy and procedural directives on documentation that clients are required to provide. In some cases, forms are developed by the ministry specifically to confirm eligibility for the supplement.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
3.1 Percentage of clients receiving a service who are confirmed eligible for the service.	100%	100%	100%	0%

Source: Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

The ministry is also committed to ensuring consistency and fairness in providing supplementary assistance. In doing so, staff are provided with comprehensive policy direction and procedural advice to determine eligibility. In turn, this enables them to assist clients in submitting adequate evidence to justify their request. When more complicated supplementary assistance is required, special request forms have been developed to solicit the necessary information. For example, a Medical Equipment Justification Form has been developed for clients requesting medical equipment. This form includes a recommendation

from the client's physician, as well as results from functional assessments and equipment trials by an occupational therapist and/or physical therapist. These verifications are important in meeting the ministry's regulatory requirements.

Goal 4: Individuals have access to a fair and timely appeal process

Performance Measures	Results	
4.1 Percentage of appeals processed from initial intake to final decisions within statutory timelines.	✓	Achieved
4.2 Percentage of appeals heard within 15 business day statutory time limit.	✓	Achieved

The BC Employment and Assistance appeal system provides unbiased, fair, timely and transparent decision-making for clients.

Clients have the right to request a reconsideration of ministry decisions. This is an internal ministry process (see Measure 5.3 for more information). If dissatisfied with a decision, a client may then appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

The tribunal operates independently of the ministry under the authority of the *Employment and Assistance Act* and administers the appeal process through a central office based in Victoria. It is composed of a full-time tribunal chair and one or more part-time vice-chairs appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, approximately 250 regionally-based panel members appointed by the Minister, and 13 staff. Targets for both performance measures to monitor Goal 4 were achieved.

Core Business Areas: Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal

Objective 1: Decisions are made on appeals and parties notified within the statutory timelines.

Strategies

1. The processing of appeals, including timeliness, is monitored and the rules of procedure are amended as required to maximize efficiency of the process.
2. Effective administrative support is provided to the hearing panels.

Performance Measure and Results

The tribunal is required by statute and regulation to process appeals according to various timelines. Measure 4.1 tracks the tribunal's success in meeting these timelines. A higher percentage indicates success in meeting all timelines and delivering timely decisions. Measure 4.2 tracks the percentage of appeals heard within the 15 business day statutory time limit as set out in the Employment and Assistance Regulation and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Regulation.

Performance Measures	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
4.1 Percentage of appeals processed from initial intake to final decisions within statutory timelines.	100%	100%	0%
4.2 Percentage of appeals heard within the 15 business day statutory limit.	100%	100%	0%

Source: BC Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

The tribunal received 1,510 appeals in 2004/05, an increase of 24 per cent from last fiscal year. Despite the increase, the tribunal processed all appeals and brought them to a final decision within statutory timelines.

Goal 5: The ministry operates effectively, responsively and accountably

Performance Measures	Results	
5.1 Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.	✓✓	Exceeded
5.2 Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.	✓	Achieved
5.3 Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days.	✗	Missed
5.4 Percentage of employees with a performance and development plan.	✓✓	Exceeded
5.5 Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.	✓✓	Exceeded

Core Business Areas: Executive and Support Services

Objective 1: Service delivery is streamlined and effective.

Strategies

1. Technology-based options for ministry operations are implemented.
2. Performance improvement initiatives are implemented.
3. Risks that could affect the ministry's ability to fulfil its goals are identified, evaluated and managed.

To operate effectively and efficiently, the ministry requires a workforce that is well trained and motivated, uses technology to facilitate work processes and effectively manages risks.

Performance Measure and Results

Four of the performance measures under this goal have either met or exceeded targets.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
5.1 Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.[1]	37.3%	41.8%	45.0%	53.0%	+8.0%

[1] These figures are derived based on a "snap-shot" as of March 2003, 2004 and 2005 (respectively for each fiscal year). The proportion is calculated by dividing the number of clients using Electronic Funds Transfer with all clients for a point in time.

Source: Financial Accounting and Reporting Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Electronic fund transfers is an efficient way to provide income assistance to clients. It offers many advantages such as reduced costs and delivery of payments through a verified process. Both clients and the ministry also consider electronic fund transfers as more efficient and effective than issuing paper cheques.

Measure 5.1 shows that the proportion of clients using Electronic Fund Transfer has increased each year since 2002/03. It also demonstrates that the ministry had been successful at using technology-based options to provide streamlined and effective service.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
5.2 Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.	100%	100%	0%

Source: Financial Operations, Ministry of Human Resources.

Each ministry, under the direction of the Deputy Minister, is responsible for:

- Establishing a risk management process that is clearly defined, documented and fully integrated with other strategic and operational processes;
- Developing and implementing risk management plans as part of its service plan, programs and operations; and
- Continuously applying risk management practices in decision-making, including proper accountability, evaluation, performance monitoring and reporting, and improvement of planning and practices.

Each ministry must develop and maintain the culture, processes and accountability structures that facilitate comprehensive risk identification of all strategic, program or operational risks. The Deputy Minister and Executive must also undertake a risk analysis of the ministry at a strategic level on an annual basis.

In 2004/05, the Strategic Risk Profile was completed, thereby achieving the target for Measure 5.2. In 2005/06, under the direction of the ministry's new Risk and Audit Committee, the Strategic Risk Profile is being revisited. The resultant Strategic Risk and Opportunities Profile will be updated regularly to ensure it meets the needs of the ministry in a timely manner. It will also be used to assist in the implementation of Enterprise-Wide Risk Management across the ministry.

Objective 2 : Reconsideration issues are efficiently resolved.

Strategy

1. Meet regulatory requirements for reconsideration.

Performance Measure and Results

Clients have the right to request a reconsideration of ministry decisions. This is an internal ministry process — "second look" — that is separate from the external appeal process. Clients can apply to Reconsideration Adjudicators to review the ministry's decision. If dissatisfied with this decision, a client may appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

Measure 5.3 reflects the ministry's desire to provide timely and efficient service to clients. A higher percentage for this measure indicates the ministry is more effective at meeting regulatory requirements and providing timely and efficient service to clients. A baseline was established in 2003/04 and the targets for subsequent years call for a steady increase in this measure.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
5.3 Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days.	81.9%	86%	79.7%	-6.3%

Source: Legislation and Legal Services Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

The reconsideration decisions which exceeded ten business days were generally decisions that involved complex medical concerns. Reviewing eligibility for health-related supplements and persons with disability designation requires detailed examination of medical evidence, sometimes delaying the decison.

While the ministry did not achieve its target for the entire fiscal year, it continues to review the process to provide more timely reconsideration decisions. In the last quarter of 2004/05 (January to March 2005), 88.5 per cent of all reconsiderations were completed within ten business days.

Objective 3: The ministry is a responsive and motivating employer.

Strategy

1. Employee performance, planning and development reviews support ministry goals and objectives, and career endeavours.

Performance Measure and Results

Performance and development plans and personal learning plans are tools designed to assist employees towards greater employee performance and satisfaction. A performance and

development plan sets out the commitments of the employee and the employer to ensure success on the job and fulfillment of career plans. A personal learning plan sets out the employee's goals for development and the efforts that will be made by the employee and the employer to support success.

Performance Measures	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual	2004/05 Variance
5.4 Percentage of employees with a performance and development plan.	50%	75%	80%	+5%
5.5 Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.	Establish baseline	75%	80%	+5%

Source: Strategic Human Resources Branch, Ministry of Human Resources.

Measure 5.4 tracks the proportion of ministry employees with a performance and development plan and Measure 5.5 tracks those with a personal learning plan. Targets for both measures were achieved in 2004/05 — an indication that the ministry is closer to meeting its objective of being an employer that is responsive and motivates.

Deregulation

The ministry has exceeded the objective of a one-third reduction in regulatory requirement, announced in the *British Columbia Government Strategic Plan 2002/03–2004/05*, by reducing requirements by 34.3 per cent. The legislative framework for British Columbia's income assistance system is now simpler and more understandable.

While the ministry will continue to monitor the Acts/Regulations for change and possible further reduction, no significant additional regulatory requirements are anticipated.

Report on Resources

Introduction

The annual budget is based on core business assumptions contained in the ministry's three-year Service Plan. The plan utilized forecasts of expenditure and caseload trends, plus anticipated impacts of legislative, policy and program changes. Ministry overall financial results were sensitive to fluctuations in caseload and program demand. The ministry manages its core businesses with the objective of achieving its overall budget.

2004/05 Resource Summary

	Estimated	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance[1]
Operating Expenses ($000)					
Employment Programs	71,475	0	71,475	77,895	6,420
Temporary Assistance	382,176	0	382,176	377,999	(4,177)
Disability Assistance	476,358	10,000	486,358	508,850	22,492
Supplementary Assistance	165,630	0	165,630	166,246	616
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	2,467	0	2,467	1,455	(1,012)
Executive and Support Services	203,319	0	203,319	173,580	(29,739)
Total	**1,301,425**	**0**	**1,311,425**	**1,306,025**	**(5,400)**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	14	0	14	10	(4)
Executive and Support Services	1,972	0	1,972	1,859	(113)
Total	**1,986**	**0**	**1,986**	**1,869**	**(117)**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)					
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	35	0	35	0	(35)
Executive and Support Services	21,512	0	21,512	4,804	(16,708)
Total	**21,547**	**0**	**21,547**	**4,804**	**(16,743)**

[1] *Variance display convention has been changed this year to be consistent with the Public Accounts. Variance is in all cases "Actual" minus "Total Estimates". If the Actual is greater then the Variance will be displayed as a positive number.*

Explanation of Variances

Employment Programs

The over-expenditure of $6.4 million, or 9.0 per cent, is a result of the ministry moving more clients with employment-related obligations through various ministry employment training and placement services and programs, as demonstrated in Measures 1.2 and 1.3. Savings from an Expenditure Management Plan in Executive and Support Services covered the over-expenditure.

Temporary Assistance

The under-expenditure of $4.2 million, or 1.0 per cent, is the result of:

- A lower temporary assistance caseload. The temporary assistance actual average caseload was 54,100, 4.0 per cent lower than the budgeted average caseload of 56,200.

Disability Assistance

The over-expenditure of $22.5 million, or 5.0 per cent, is the result of:

- Higher than anticipated growth in the persons with disabilities caseload. The persons with disabilities actual average caseload was 53,700, 2.0 per cent higher than the budgeted average caseload of 52,500.
- A $10 million budget lift approved through Supplementary Estimates to cover additional expenditures of $18.5 million for a rate increase announced in November 2004 for persons with disabilities. An Expenditure Management Plan in Executive and Support Services covered $8.5 million of the expenditures.

Supplementary Assistance

The over-expenditure of $0.6 million, or less than 1.0 per cent, is the result of an increased demand in supplementary and health assistance requirements due to the increase in persons with disabilities clients.

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal

The under-expenditure of $1.0 million, or 41.0 per cent, is due to a lower than anticipated number of appeals and operating costs.

Executive and Support Services

The under-expenditure of $29.7 million, or 15.0 per cent, is the result of:

- An Expenditure Management Plan, implemented to offset additional expenditures resulting from the rate increase for persons with disabilities and greater than anticipated caseload growth and additional Employment Program demand.

Capital Expenditures

The ministry's capital budget was under spent by $16.7 million, or 78.0 per cent, due to changing priorities in the information technology capital plan.

Appendix

The performance measures outlined in the table below for 2004/05 will be excluded in the next Service Plan Annual Report. The reasons for discontinuing are also stated.

2004/05 Discontinued Performance Measures	Explanation
1.2 Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan.	All clients with employment-related obligations are expected to have an active employment plan. Those who do not have employment-related obligations are exempt for valid reasons. A new measure in 2005/06 — average percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who leave the caseload each month — replaces it (see table below on New Performance Measures). The ministry feels that knowing Employment Plans have been effective is more important than knowing clients have them.
1.3 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.	This measure focuses on one client group within the expected to work client category. It is replaced by the new measure — average percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who leave the caseload each month — which captures results of all ministry programs rather than one particular program.
2.4 Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.	As persons with multiple barriers to employment are now included in clients who receive temporary assistance, it is expected that they have employment-related obligations. Ministry staff continues to work with them to minimize or overcome their barriers to employment. The ministry feels that Measure 1.1 — percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations — more accurately captures how this client group is performing, together with all clients that have employment-related obligations.
3.1 Percentage of clients receiving a service who are confirmed eligible for the service.	All clients must be determined eligible before receiving a service. The ministry will continue to monitor this measure internally but will no longer publish results in the next annual report.
4.1 Percentage of appeals processed from initial intake to final decisions within statutory timelines.	Measure 4.2 — percentage of appeals commenced within the 15 business day statutory limit — is considered by the ministry to be sufficient for measuring the objective of having decisions on appeals and notification to parties made within the statutory timelines. Measure 4.2 includes both the appeal process and the final decision in the result. Therefore, the ministry has decided to remove Measure 4.1.
5.1 Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.	The ministry will continue to monitor four performance measures in Goal 5 internally but will no longer publish the results in the next Annual Report. Measure 5.1 will be monitored internally as the ministry still wants to promote the use of electronic fund transfers.
5.2 Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.	Measure 5.2 will be monitored internally as the ministry continues to enhance enterprise-wide risk management.
5.4 Percentage of employees with a performance and development plan.	The completion of employee performance and development plans (EPDP) is an ongoing task and, once completed, plans are continually updated. Fluctuations in this measure primarily result from staff movement between jobs and classifications.
5.5 Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.	Personal learning plans are a component of employee performance and development plans. The completion of personal learning plans is an ongoing task and, once completed, plans are continually updated. Fluctuations in this measure primarily result from staff movement between jobs and classifications or completion of training.

Glossary

Caseload — Number of family units receiving temporary, disability or supplementary assistance.

Disability Assistance — Income assistance provided to eligible persons who have been designated as meeting the criteria of a Person with Disabilities, as defined in the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Employment-related Obligations — The ministry's expectation that a client will seek work, based upon individual ability.

Employment Plan — A document that initiates discussion between the client and the ministry and supports employment planning and successful client outcomes. This is a mandatory requirement for most clients with employment-related obligations.

Employment Programs — Programs targeted toward employment and job readiness established or funded under the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal — Agency that administers the appeal panel process. Its role begins when a Notice of Appeal is received from the appellant. At that point, the ministry operates at 'arms length' from the tribunal process, and is simply one of the parties to the appeal.

Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities — A strategy designed to assist persons with disabilities to participate in employment-related activities to the best of their ability. The strategy recognizes that individuals experience disabilities in varying degrees, at different stages of their lives, and provides flexibility for those who want to volunteer or work full-time, part-time, or be self-employed.

Persons with Disabilities — People meeting the criteria as set out in the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers — People with multiple barriers to employment are those who meet the criteria as set out in the Employment and Assistance Regulations. Examples of multiple barriers are literacy issues, limited education and work experience, long-term dependence on assistance and medical conditions that preclude or impede employment.

Reconsideration — When a client disagrees with a ministry decision, the client may request a review of the decision. The process involves a written request, which is reviewed by a Reconsideration Adjudicator who makes a new decision. If the client does not agree with that decision, the matter may proceed to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

Supplementary Assistance — Supplementary assistance addresses pressing needs, such as health assistance, emergency social services, bus passes and emergency shelters.

Temporary Assistance — Income assistance provided to eligible persons who are expected to achieve independence through employment.